

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
PARK BOARD
HELD AT CITY HALL
DECEMBER 13, 2011
7:01 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Steel called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm

II. ROLL CALL

Answering roll call were Members Steel, Deeds, Fronek, Jacobson, Jones, Lough, Meyer, Segreto, Neville, Weicht

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Member Deeds made a motion, seconded by Member Lough, approving the meeting agenda.

Ayes: Steel, Deeds, Fronek, Jacobson, Jones, Lough, Meyer, Segreto

Motion carried.

IV. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

Member Segreto made a motion, seconded by Member Deeds approving the consent agenda as follows:

IV.A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting of Monday, November 7, 2011

Ayes: Steel, Deeds, Fronek, Jacobson, Jones, Lough, Meyer, Segreto

Motion carried.

V. COMMUNITY COMMENT

None

VI. REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

VI.A. Edina Park Recycling Bin Recommendations – Dianne Plunkett Latham, Edina Energy & Environment Commission

Dianne Plunkett Latham, Chair of the Edina Energy and Environment Commission (EEC) gave a presentation to the Park Board on having recycling bins in the parks. She explained that both Mr. Keprios and she feel that there is still more work to be done before a recommendation can be made and therefore feel that a Task Force would be a good way to do that with people who specialize in recycling. Ms. Latham suggested that the Task Force consist of the four members from the Recycling Solid Waste Working group, Vince Cockriel, Solvei Wilmot, Tom Shirley and herself as well as any Park Board members who would be interested in serving. She pointed out that once the Task Force is set up they will evaluate what the best way is to get the recycling bins in the parks.

Mr. Keprios commented that staff is in support of expanding the recycling program and feels it would make the most sense to have the Task Force report directly to the EEC and continue to do so until they have formed a plan of action and then forward that to the Park Board.

Member Deeds asked if there is any impact on the operating budget on the recycling bins in terms of Park and Recreation. Mr. Cockriel replied it has been a little bit of extra work but once it gets into motion he thinks it will depend on the recycling contractor and how picky they are regarding contaminants. Ms. Latham added that the technology at the material recycling facilities has improved significantly over the years and therefore she doesn't envision there being a problem.

VI.B. Revised Turf Management Plan – Dianne Plunkett Latham, Edina Energy & Environment Commission

Ms. Latham informed the Park Board that since the September 13, 2011 meeting Ms. Paterlini and herself met with Mr. MacHolda because there were some errors on how some of the athletic fields were categorized. Ms. Latham went through those changes.

Ms. Paterlini informed the committee that typically when a field is sprayed it says to stay off of it for three days and the EEC is proposing to change that to seven days. Also, some boulevards were added where children seemed to play quite a bit. A summary of those changes were given to the Park Board.

Member Meyer indicated that he thinks there should be some kind of a recovery plan if something were to get out of whack; staff would have the consent to fix it because if staff had to go through a certain chain of commands they could lose days and all of a sudden there would be a huge mess that could cost thousands of dollars to fix. He noted if there was an aberration because of weather or something else and weeds totally take over an area there should be a recovery plan so that they can react versus coming to boards to get approval. Ms. Latham replied there shouldn't be a problem and she would rather change the policy if a situation like that happened and something needed to be sprayed. She stated it's pretty balanced right now and if they look at it every couple of years she thinks they can keep it balanced. Mr. Keprios asked Member Meyer when he says he thinks they should consider a recovery plan is he suggesting the use of pesticides at that point for recovery or is he suggesting to re-turf the areas. Member Meyer responded that what he is saying is he doesn't want to build a system that is so rigid that they are short of fields or they destroy scenic areas because they can't respond to what is going on.

Member Deeds asked if someone will oversee it on a quarterly or at a minimum on an annual basis whether it is working or not so that probably won't happen. He stated that he thinks in order to get at the issues that are being raised there should be a regular discussion around some of the designated areas whether it's working or not and whether some areas are out of control. He added that it could also be that some areas are working so well they could move them from B to OC. He indicated that since it's a learning process there should be a review process. Ms. Latham asked Member Deeds how often he would recommend to which Mr. Deeds replied he would ask Mr. Cockriel his thoughts. Mr. Cockriel replied that the plan itself states they can expect a minimum of three years for organics to actually start working where they get integrated into the system enough where they are doing something so to review it before then probably doesn't make any sense. Member Deeds asked if during the summer of 2013 would be a good time to look at it to which Mr. Cockriel replied that the best time to see what is working and what is not working is shortly after the spring bloom of weeds.

Member Lough asked if it would be possible to construct some sort of emergency response plan that may not have to be reviewed and approved beforehand but would require approval, so to speak, after the fact. He explained that way if something were to happen like that then higher authorities can look at it and understand the reasoning that was used. Ms. Latham indicated that is the problem to have requisite transparency versus the ability to do it. She stated that many parents want to know what is happening with a particular field and they need to have something with transparency and approval.

Ms. Paterlini asked what would constitute an emergency and asked Mr. Cockriel how many emergencies he has seen to which Mr. Cockriel replied that to him none of them are emergencies. Ms. Paterlini commented that it seems to defy the purpose of any policy that can be invalidated every time they see a dandelion. Member Deeds responded he doesn't believe it would be invalidated every time they see a dandelion but he does believe things can get out of balance due to weather where they could lose a large area of land that they would need to clear out and re-sod. Ms. Latham stated maybe they need to have annual reviews.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that both Mr. Cockriel and he do not support the recommendation of staying off the grass for seven days after being sprayed. He explained that they have been required by law and continue to do notifications as required by the federal government and the state government as is labeled on every product that their trained professional park maintenance people use; none of which state to stay off for seven days. Ms. Latham asked Ms. Paterlini if she thought they could live with whatever state law requires to which Ms. Paterlini replied yes. Member Steel added if parents choose to keep their kids off longer they can see the posted dates of application and can make their own decision. Ms. Paterlini pointed out that their first intent is trying to make people have chemical awareness and there are lots of substances around.

Member Deeds suggested a page be put on the city website that simply states when the parks were sprayed and what was sprayed. Mr. Cockriel replied that there are so many factors with weather conditions that go into spraying that it would require a lot of data entry that would not have very accurate information. Mr. Cockriel indicated that a notice ahead of time on the website that says these are the fields that are sprayed on a yearly basis and typically the spray time is between May 15 and June 15. He added they could also list the products and their websites that are used so people can look them up. Member Steel stated a press release in the spring would be a good vehicle for educating people.

Mr. Keprios noted that he agrees they need to devote some space to educate the public about the turf management plan and that signage will be the instant information to educate people; however, he thinks it might be confusing if they start placing signs that say they don't spray in certain areas because then people will assume that we spray every place that does not have a sign. Therefore, he would not like to go down that road which is a part of the recommendation that the Task Force can debate and come up with some recommendations. Ms. Latham stated she is only in favor of where they are actually spraying. She added that may result in a lot of extra effort and maybe they should strike it. Mr. Cockriel stated they should also put on the website that they never spray within 30 feet of playground areas.

Member Deeds suggested putting a map on the website with the designations of what is being sprayed where. Ms. Latham commented that she has talked to Rebecca Foster, GIS Administrator, about putting together a map like that through the city's GIS system. Mr. Cockriel responded it would be a very confusing map if they GIS every little spot because some parks have areas that are not sprayed. He noted that he also talked to Ms. Foster and she said it would be a handful to take each park and break it into a half dozen different categories. Ms. Latham asked so it is doable, it would just take a lot of time, effort and money to which Mr. Cockriel replied correct.

Ms. Latham asked with those two corrections that they made she will bring this to the EEC and if no further corrections are made they will recommend that it go to City Council.

VI.C. Edina Senior Center – Bill Lough, Edina Park Board

Member Lough indicated that Ms. Weigle gave a good presentation of the Senior Center at last month's meeting. He noted that she also did a good job of outlining some of the challenges that the Senior Center experiences in trying to conduct its operations. He informed the Park Board that for 2011 the Senior Center is budgeted to lose approximately \$90,000 and add to that the salary and benefits of a full-time director and an additional \$20,000 which is cross charged to Hennepin County each year and a depreciation estimate of \$100,000. He pointed out as a Park Board they were pretty interested in enterprise facilities that were losing approximately \$100,000 and were quite concerned about how they might improve the operations. Therefore, he thinks that if the same rules apply to the Senior Center they should take an interest in exactly what they have there.

Member Lough informed the Park Board that he feels the real issue is revenues and thinks the lack of revenue is really coming from underutilization of the building itself. Member Lough went through the usage of the various classrooms and facilities within the Senior Center. He stated that the building itself does not have a high occupancy rate and so he thinks they are not getting revenues to cover the costs of running the building. He added that it is also his understanding that programming outside of the building is also losing money; however, he does not think that is the biggest issue in terms of the revenues.

Member Lough pointed out that the challenge to this is the parking issue. He noted that programming at the Senior Center has been scheduled during times so as to not create conflicts with the library or with people who are trying to overlap and use the Senior Center itself. He stated that he thinks revenue utilization is something they should be concerned about regardless of parking.

Member Lough added that he has also advocated opening the Senior Center or parts of the Senior Center during the evening at times over the years and thinks cost is usually raised as an issue.

Member Lough pointed out that he has heard from a number of sources that it is hard to find meeting space in this town and that if you need to hold a meeting you have to ask for it well ahead of time. He noted that it would seem to him that the Senior Center along with other buildings might be a possible source of use to increase or to optimize the meeting space in this town. He stated there may even be other programs using the space for revenue; it doesn't have to be senior programming. He commented maybe they explore synergies by meshing with other groups in the community to better utilize the facility.

Member Jacobson indicated that she also remembers Ms. Weigle mention that she didn't want to add additional programming because they would need additional staff. She stated she would be curious to find out how much staff they would need to support the cost.

Member Meyer asked are there options to fix the parking issue. Mr. Keprios responded they have been working with the new management, who has taken over the office building, regarding access to their ramp. He noted that if worse comes to worse they could convert what is left of Grandview Square Park and convert it to asphalt and make it a parking lot. He stated it is a big issue and a tough problem because we want to be good neighbors with the library and the office tenants and condominium tenants. It's a team effort and they don't want to consider themselves in competition with the library and all of a sudden disregard their need for parking.

Member Jones indicated that there is on-road parking spaces on Grandview Square Park marked for Grandview residents and guests only. She noted that she would like to see what type of agreement the city has with them that give them permission to park on the road and have it be exclusive for their use.

Member Deeds indicated that even given parking constraints it seems that they are way underperforming and it would probably be worth having someone take a look at utilization as well as what else could be put there.

Member Meyer commented that staffing costs should not be the reason that a meeting room is not being provided for a professional group who are Edina citizens, it's a city resource.

Member Jones made a motion, seconded by Member Lough, in order to get a better understanding of the parking situation at the Senior Center as well as to inform the Grandview Small Area Planning Committee for potential improvements to this site for both the short and long term the Park Board requests that the City Council directs staff to examine the parking situation

adjacent to the Senior Center Hennepin County Library building and report back to the Park Board at its January meeting. The report should answer the following questions: How many additional parking spaces would be needed to allow the city to more fully utilize the Senior Center and what is the contractual agreement with Grandview Condominiums and office buildings for the 22 on-street parking spots across from the Senior Center that are currently restricted and the contractual relationship if any of the ramp across the street from the Senior Center.

Mr. Keprios asked Member Jones if he heard correctly that she is requesting staff to have a report ready by the January City Council meeting. Member Jones replied not the January City Council meeting but the January Park Board meeting. She explained the reason for January is because the Grandview Commons meeting is right around that time and she would like to be able to tell the consultants what they feel they need in terms of net parking spaces. Mr. Keprios replied because staff's plate is so full right now that he would be able to come up with something very brief but would not be able to get an in depth study done in that time frame.

Member Meyer asked shouldn't they be involving somebody else in this such as the Planning Commission or Transportation Commission. He suggested maybe the answer is a summary that comes in January with a synopsis of what they are able to do so far and shoot for a full report come February or March. He also pointed out that the fact Grandview is marking city street parking spaces as being their own also raises some issues.

Member Deeds stated that he also thinks it's important to see what can be done within the constraints that exist that are not currently being done.

Member Segreto asked what the contractual agreement is that gives the townhouses the right to park on a City street. Mr. Keprios replied he will look into it and get that information.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that if there are agenda items, such as this, they would like placed on the agenda it would be nice to have those specific ideas far enough in advance so that staff can do the adequate research and be better prepared to answer more intelligently so that Park Board can have the right information to make informed decisions. Member Steel asked Mr. Keprios if he would be able to provide Member Jones with some concrete evidence showing they really need this. Mr. Keprios replied that he will meet with Ms. Weigle and they will come up with the number of parking stalls that they feel they are currently lacking. He added they will go back into the records and find what it is that Ms. Weigle and he recommended at the time of the design but obviously did not happen. Member Jones stated that for the record she recently counted the parking spaces and there are 138 on and off road parking spaces near the building. There are 100 off road and 38 on-road spaces. She pointed out that with the capacity of around 300 for the Senior Center and the equal footprint for the library 138 spaces is not adequate.

Ayes: Lough, Jones, Meyers, Steel

Nays: Fronek, Segreto, Deeds, Jacobson

Motion failed

VI.D. Work Plan – Keeya Steel, Vice Chair Edina Park Board

Member Steel indicated that given the amount of work Park Board is doing and the different topics they are covering as well as annual items she suggested the Park Board should come up with some kind of Work Plan. Mr. Keprios responded that he thinks he can put together a pretty good work plan in time for the January meeting for the Park Board to consider and discuss.

Member Steel indicated that she thinks it will be helpful to include working groups as well. Member Deeds noted that the sports dome study should be ready for the February 14th Park Board meeting.

Member Meyer commented that it seems like there is getting to be a capacity of issues and suggested they may want to look at having a couple of extended workshops. He indicated they are starting to get into a lot of things, although he thinks temporarily, but the volume they are trying to accomplish may not fit the meeting schedule.

Member Fronek suggested when they review the enterprise facilities it can get to be a bit too much and suggested spreading those out over the year.

Member Fronek noted he would recommend that the Senior Center be put on the work plan for next year. Member Steel suggested they correlate that with Edinborough Park because they are based on and serviced on kind of similar discussions.

VI.E. Donations Policy & Naming of Parks and Facilities Policy Working Group Update – Ellen Jones, Edina Park Board

Member Jones informed the Park Board that they have completed the naming policy and procedure recommendation; however they are not going to take a final vote until they finish the donation policy and procedure.

VI.F. User Fees Policy Working Group Update – Keeya Steel, Vice Chair Edina Park Board

Member Steel informed the Park Board they have received a lot of information and at their meeting tomorrow they will be focusing on costs and fee structures of the athletic associations. She noted that coming up they will be discussing what it means to be a priority user association and what kind of services those associations receive.

She added that she is putting together a document outlining the information they have received because she thinks it will be educational for the Park Board and City Council as they move along.

VI.G. Grandview Plan Update – Ellen Jones, Edina Park Board

Member Jones informed the Park Board the Grandview Plan is moving along and on December 20th a draft will be presented to the City Council and on January 7th the Steering Committee will meet and come up with recommendations that they feel are capable of being presented to the boards.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

None

VIII. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Fronek stated that he would formally like to recognize Ed MacHolda and his service to the City; it's a big loss to the City. He stated on behalf of the Park Board he would like to extend a thanks and gratitude for his service.

IX. STAFF COMMENTS

IX.A. 2012 Park Board Meeting Calendar – Mr. Keprios pointed out to the Park Board that the only meeting not being held on the second Tuesday of the month this year will be the August meeting. He noted that due to the primary election the Park Board meeting will be held on Monday, August 13th.

Mr. Keprios introduced and informed the Park Board that Ann Kattreh is now the Park and Recreation Assistant Director. He indicated that he appreciates Member Fronek's comments on Ed MacHolda and

that staff misses him and is saddened that he voluntarily resigned and chose to move onto something else. They wish him the very best.

Mr. Keprios handed out the following Staff Updates.

Work Session Meeting Notice:

- The Park Board is asked to attend a Joint Work Session with the City Council on Tuesday, January 3, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. in the Community Room to hear the Edinborough Park consultant's study results and recommendations.

Staff Updates:

1. The general skating rink at Countryside Park is being flooded and maintained for this year's skating season. The warming house will be open and will have a Warming House Attendant on duty throughout the outdoor skating season.
2. Last week the City of Minneapolis staff approached me and the Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of St. Louis Park to re-open the discussion of using the City of Minneapolis Water Works Department property at 40th and France as an off-leash dog park.
3. The Edina Soccer Association has offered to donate funds to convert the softball field at Highlands Park into a soccer field. It would involve removing the backstop at Highlands Park, plant grass or place sod in the softball field infield area and install irrigation.
4. The Lacrosse Association is requesting that the baseball field at Wooddale Park be converted to a lacrosse field.
5. At the December 6, 2011 City Council meeting, former Edina Park Director Bob Kojetin handed out the attached letter dated December 4, 2011 and he also handed out the attached "Oral History" done by Bob Kojetin.
6. The Edina Hockey Alumni Association will be giving the Park Board a presentation at a future Park Board meeting regarding a \$4 million addition to Braemar Arena to build locker rooms for boys and girls Edina Varsity and Junior Varsity hockey teams on the main floor and a dry-land training facility on the second level which will be run by a private organization.
7. The Edina Aquatic Center Flowrider amenity is under construction.
8. Hoisington Koepler Group Inc. has been hired to further analyze the proposed phase one development of the Countryside Park master plan.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:50